THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No damage has been caused to the monument by the Archaeological Survey of India in the course of conservation and repairs.

(c) The portion of the structure, which had fallen from the minar recently has been restored.

Fall in ground-water level in Andhra Pradesh

*210 DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the ground-water level in districts of Srikakulam and Chittoor of Andhra Pradesh has gone down the level of more than four metres thereby making the situation alarming;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the remedial measures Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Ground water levels in certain parts of the districts of Srikakulam and Chittoor in Andhra Pradesh have declined by more than four metres. Decline in levels of ground water in certain parts of Srikakulam district last 10 years has been from 0.01 to 5.72 metres in pre-monsoon periods whereas in chittoor district, it has been from 0.27 to 4.39 metres in post-monsoon periods.

Water being a State subject, it is primarily the responsibility of the concerned State Government to plan, finance and execute schemes for augmenting water resources. Government of India is also promoting rainwater harvesting through Watershed Management Programme, artificial recharge of ground water and roof top rain water harvesting under various schemes. Various measures as initiated by the Central Government for water conservation and augmenting ground water resources are indicated below:—

(i) Constitution of Central Ground Water Authority under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 for regulation and control of ground water management and development.

(ii) Circulation of a Model Bill to all the States / Union Territories to

enable them to enact suitable legislation for regulation and control of ground water development.

(iii) Circulation of Manual on artificial recharge of ground water to the States / Union Territories to enable them to formulate area specific artificial recharge schemes to check the declining trend in ground water levels.

(iv) Implementation of Pilot Central Sector Scheme on "Studies on Artificial Recharge of Ground Water" in the country at an estimated cost of Rs. 25.00 crore. Recharging wells and rain water harvesting are integral part of this scheme. The results of the scheme have been found to be very encouraging.

Under-Utilization of Kochi Airport

*211. SHRI R.P. GOEKNA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the huge infrastructural facilities and flight handling capacities created at a cost of Rs. 309 crores at the newly build private international airport at Kochi continue to be grossly underutilized causing heavy losses for the last three years;

(b) if so, the extent of losses suffered with reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is a fact that although a number of international carriers have expressed interest to operative from Kochi, their requests are being ignored to avoid competition for the national carriers, thereby sending wrong signals to other prospective investors; and

(d) the details thereof and action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN): (a) and (b) The ineternational airport at Cochin belongs to the State Government of Kerala and is a joint venture with the private sector. It is one of the two international airports in Kerala besides Thiruvananthapuram. International flights of Air India and Indian Airlines also operate out of Calicut. Therefore the infrastructural facilities etc. built at the Cochin airport was with the full knowledge of the parties concerned about operations of international flights from other airports in Kerala. The Government of India does not have any information in respect of losses suffered by the Cochin airport. The same is being obtained from State Government / Cochin International Airport Limited (CIAL).